

REMARKS

Applicants have now had an opportunity to carefully consider the Examiner's Office Action of August 29, 2001. Claims 1-19 remain in the application. Claim 20 has been added. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE OFFICE ACTION

Claims 1 to 15 are objected to because of various informalities.

Claims 1, 5 to 8, 10 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,017,219 to Adams, Jr. et al.

Claims 2 to 4, 9 and 16 to 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,017,219 to Adams, Jr. et al. in view of US Patent No. 5,878,396 to Henton.

Claims 9 and 11 to 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,017,219 to Adams, Jr. et al. in view of US Patent No. 5,920,838 to Mostow et al.

THE CLAIMS OBJECTIONS

The Examiner objected to claims 1-15 because of various informalities. Independent claim 1 has been amended by deleting "for a user" in the preamble. As such, the objections are submitted to be overcome.

THE CLAIMS DISTINGUISH OVER THE TEACHINGS OF THE REFERENCES

Claims 1, 5 to 8, 10 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,017,219 to Adams, Jr. et al.

Applicants have carefully reviewed the cited prior art reference of Adams, Jr. et al. It is respectfully submitted that the Adams, Jr. et al. reference does not teach a system providing feedback in the form of a confidence measure, where the feedback reflects precision at which the user replicates the audible speech.

In a preferred embodiment of the instant invention, the precision is correlated to customized scoring tables which provide a score. The overall scores include numeric values (for sentence groups, sentences, words, and sub-words) calibrated to account for the student's level such as

novice, intermediate, advanced, or expert. Alternatively, feedback may take the form of graphic images such as icons or audio segments.

Applicants respectfully assert that Adams, Jr. et al. does not disclose these features. Indeed, Applicants submit that Adams, Jr. et al. is silent in regards to providing numerical score values (or any other confidence measure) as to a precision at which the user replicates the audible speech.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 1, and claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinct over the teachings of the cited reference. The rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-4, 9 and 16-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams, Jr. et al. in view of Henton. However, the Examiner has established no suggestion or motivation in either reference for that combination.

Moreover, even if the references could somehow be combined, amended independent claims 1, 16 and 17, include recitations relating to feedback being comprised of a confidence measure (or score, icon, or audio segment) reflecting a precision at which the user replicates the audible speech in a selected language based on a comparison. As such, for the reasons stated above, these claims, and all claims dependent thereon (i.e. claims 2-4, 9, and 18-19), distinguish over the art. Specifically, the claims patentably distinguish over Adams, Jr. et al. and Henton, either alone or in combination.

Claims 9 and 11-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Adams, Jr. et al. in view of Mostow et al. However, even if the resultant combination could somehow be realized, claim 1 includes the features as noted above. Therefore, all claims dependent on claim 1, including claims 9 and 11-14, are distinguishable over the cited art. That is, the suggested combination of Adams, Jr. et al. in view of Mostow et al. does not render the subject claims obvious.

CONCLUSION

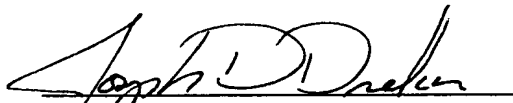
In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. An early notice to that effect is therefore earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date:

February 28, 2002

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph D. Dreher", written over a horizontal line.

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Attachment: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 2, 16 and 17 as follows:

1. (Amended) A system for interactive language instruction [for a user] comprising:
a first module configured to convert input text to audible speech in a selected language, the audible speech being patterned after a model;
a user interface configured to receive utterances spoken by a user in response to a prompt to replicate the audible speech; and,
a second module configured to recognize the utterances and provide feedback to the user, the feedback being comprised of a confidence measure reflecting [as to] a precision at which the user replicates the audible speech in the selected language based on a comparison of the utterances to one of the audible speech and the model.

2. (Amended) The system as set forth in claim 1 further comprising a third module synchronized to the first module[, third module] for producing an animated image of a human face and head pronouncing the audible speech.

16. A system comprising:
a first module configured to convert input text to audible speech in a selected language, the audible speech indicative of a model;
a second module synchronized to the first module, the second module producing an animated image of a human face and head pronouncing the audible speech;
a user interface positioned to receive utterances spoken by a user in response to a prompt to replicate the audible speech; and,
a third module configured to recognize the utterances and provide feedback to the user, the feedback being comprised of at least one of a score, an icon and an audio segment reflecting [as to] a precision at which the user replicates the speech in the selected language based on a comparison of the utterances to one of the audible speech and the model.

17. (Amended) A method for voice interactive language instruction comprising:
converting input text data to audible speech data;
generating audible speech comprising phonemes based on the audible speech data;
outputting the audible speech through an audio output device;
generating an animated image of a face and head pronouncing the audible speech;
synchronizing the audible speech and the video image;
prompting [the] a user to replicate the audible speech;
recognizing utterances generated by the user in response to the prompting;
comparing the audible speech to the utterances; and,
providing feedback to the user based on the comparison, the feedback comprised of
at least one of a score, an icon and an audio segment reflecting a precision at which the user
replicates the audible speech.